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ABSTRACT

Adult development theorists believe that the changes that occur during the adult years are predictable and age linked. Their theories explain how change is resolved by the majority of the adult population. Three persons whose research has been influential in the field of adult development during the 1970s are Erik Erikson, Daniel Levinson, and Gail Sheehy. Erikson uses both physiological and societal considerations in charting eight life stages. According to him, each life stage unfolds in sequence; each is triggered by a turning point of increased personal vulnerability and potentiality; and each confronts the individual with central issues demanding resolution. Levinson and his associates have built upon some of the earlier research about life stages and special life stage tasks by studying men aged 18 to 47 and following them for a period of time. They conclude that men develop by periods, and each period engages adults in special tasks that they must master in order to negotiate successfully the tasks of the next period. Gail Sheehy researched the life stories of 115 middle-class Americans aged 18 to 55 to trace inner changes in her subjects, compare the developmental patterns of men and women, and examine the predictable crises for couples. Two other constructs that are critical to an understanding of adult development are role socialization and the midlife crisis or midlife transition. Together, these theories and constructs describe the facets of the adult life cycle. (KC)

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UNDERSTANDING ADULTHOOD

A review and analysis of the works of three leading authorities
on the stages and crises in adult development.

by

**MARTIN GERSTEIN, Ed.D.
MICHELE PAPEN-DANIEL, M.A., M.C.**

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Martin Gerstein who is on the counselor education faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University has been recently engaged in adult counseling while on the visiting faculty of the University of Southern California in Europe and for several years prior as the Executive Dean of Student Services at Chaffey Community College in California.

Ms. Michele Papen-Daniel who is on the human services faculty at California State University, Fullerton has conducted research on the construct of adult role socialization and has served on the visiting faculty of the University of Southern California at NATO/SHAPE headquarters in Belgium. She served as project director for a federally funded project investigating Mid Life Career Re-direction at a California Community College.

PREFACE

This monograph was developed from a series of newspaper articles written by the authors. The response to the series from both the reading public and our professional colleagues indicated to us that there was a need for an overview of major constructs used to describe adult development.

Three theorists were chosen because of their explicit articulation of the concept of developmental stages in the lives of adults. In addition, we felt that any overview of adult development should also include a discussion of the critical construct of role socialization and the highly popularized and frequently mythologized mid-life crisis.

INTRODUCTION

John is a 52 year old executive with a large insurance company. During the last five years he has felt an increasing sense of dissatisfaction with his position. He would really like to quit his job and open a small auto parts supply store. However, he is extremely concerned that the major financial change could have serious effects on his wife and his three children who are all in college.

Maria is a 37 year old homemaker. Her children are all in school and her husband is involved heavily in union activities that keep him away from home at night. Maria finds she has trouble getting up in the morning and often goes back to bed after her husband and children leave. She often finds she is tired and sad without knowing why. All the things she used to enjoy do not give her much pleasure anymore.

These adults are experiencing dissatisfaction and stress in their lives. Are the things that are happening to John and Maria typical of what an adult today might experience?

For many years there has been intense interest and study by psychologists, sociologists, and other behavioral scientists on the topic of child and adolescent development. Research and findings have been widely disseminated in the popular media. Gesell,rig, Ames, Hurlock, Spock, Piaget, Ginott are just a few of the well known names in the field of child development. All of us have been influenced to some degree by the theories, research and writings of these men and women, and a great deal is known about the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence. We can prepare ourselves to cope with the growth and changes in our children. However, we know little about the adult years.

Do people change their interests, values, and personality style during their adult years? If there is an identity crisis for adolescents, is there a comparable crisis that adults experience? Can the stresses that adults will face in their lives be predicted and prepared for?

Until very recently, interest in the adult years (defined here as the age span of roughly 30-55) on the part of social and behavioral scientists, as well as the general public, has been very limited. Perhaps this large portion of the life span has been neglected because most definitions of adulthood implied that we were "fully grown and mature" with all the work of development behind us. As Roger Gould expressed it, writing in the popular magazine *Psychology Today* (February 1972):

"Like a butterfly an adult is supposed to emerge fully formed and on cue after a succession of developmental stages of childhood . . . equipped with . . . wisdom and rationality, the adult supposedly remains quiescent for another half century or so. While children change, adults only age."

When crisis comes in adult life, when adults find that they must change, we often label their attempts (often painful) to grow and develop as being "immature." This notion of immaturity comes from the belief that only children grow and change. The concept that there are developmental changes during the adult years and that these changes are predictable, catches many adults off guard because they do not understand the normalcy of change in their lives and because they are ill equipped to deal with the stress that often accompanies these changes. This monograph will deal with the topic of adult life cycle changes in a variety of ways.

Theories of the adult life cycle will be set forth and described.

There will be a discussion of how each theory works.

Presentation of bench marks for change and the resolution of change will be featured.

Illustrations drawn from case histories described in the literature will be used to illustrate the concepts presented.

The reader of this monograph who reviews some of the books and other articles suggested should be able upon completion of their study to:

Articulate a personal view of adulthood

Identify developmental tasks of the adult life stages

Understand better the crisis points in adult life stage theory

Identify the major adult life cycle theory researchers and their main contributions to the field

Describe the limitations of adult life cycle theory

In order to set the stage for the succeeding chapters, a brief overview of the pioneer research that has defined the field of adult development follows:

Charlotte Buhler (1968) defined the life stages as being growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline after analyzing the life stories of individuals of varied nationality, occupation, and social class.

Erik Erikson (1962) of Harvard University, whose theories will be discussed more fully in following chapters, used both physiological and societal considerations in charting eight life stages. According to Erikson, each life stage unfolds in sequence; each is triggered by a turning point of increased personal vulnerability and potentiality, and each confronts the individual with central issues demanding resolution. His adult stages and life tasks will be fully explored.

Bernice Neugarten (1965) and her associates at the University of Chicago, studied middle age and later life and contributed much insight into the way social and cultural influences affect adult development. Neugarten's research indicates that perhaps stages are not the best way to conceptualize adult development. Consequently, she focuses on the timing of events in the lives of individuals.

Roger Gould (1978) while he was supervising psychiatric residents at UCLA, studied almost 1,000 subjects and is convinced that most problems of adult crisis and change are age-related.

Daniel Levinson (1978) of Yale University and his associates have built some of the earlier research about life stages and special life stage tasks by studying men ages 18 to 47 and following them for a period of time with the conclusion that men develop by periods, and each period engages adults in special tasks that they must master in

order to negotiate successfully the tasks of the next period.

Gail Sheehy (1976), the popular reporter and writer, researched the life stories of 115 middle class Americans ages 18 to 55 to trace inner changes in her subjects, compare the developmental patterns of men and women, and examine the predictable crisis for couples.

The later chapters in this monograph will discuss the research and findings of these individuals and others. In the process and supplemented by other recommended readings, we will review a number of assumptions about the adult life cycle in order that each reader may come to some conclusions, at least tentatively, concerning their validity.

A comprehensive bibliography appears at the end of the monograph, which the reader may utilize for an in-depth study of this subject.

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The Pioneer Work Of Erik Erikson

The Early Stages

Erik Erikson was one of the earliest theorists to study adult development. He recognized that throughout life there is tension between the differentiation (becoming more complex and separating ourselves from the surrounding environmental context) and the integration (becoming consistent and coherent in our thoughts, values, and feelings) of personality. Erikson proposed that in order to negotiate effectively, these somewhat opposed missions of life, there were certain tasks that each of us must face and resolve. In addition, he believed that the time that we face these tasks and resolve them is **age related**.

Consequently, he developed a theory which conceptualizes development throughout the life span by describing eight stages which humans must pass through. Each stage is denoted by and gains its special quality by the nature of a certain task which must be accomplished. Each stage begins with a crisis that creates a sense of estrangement. If the crisis is successfully resolved, the individual seems to be more vital and activated in a new way.

Erikson tells us that the successful accomplishment of each task is necessary for us to progress effectively to the next stage. He also tells us that when we are unable to accomplish a task, the result is the development of qualities within the personality that make it very difficult for us to accomplish the tasks of the subsequent stages. This does not imply that we fail to accomplish a task at the "right age" that we can never be happy or satisfied with our life. However, Erikson does believe that we are less likely to work through our lives satisfactorily without a great deal of extra effort, and perhaps help to assist us in backtracking and learning to deal effectively with the unresolved tasks.

In order to demonstrate clearly the way the theory works, we shall first focus primarily on the early stages of life; for in a discussion of development, one must begin at the beginning. Later in this chapter we will explore, in depth, the adult stages and the application of the total theory to adult life.

The first stage that Erikson posits takes place between birth and two years of age. The task the infant must accomplish at this stage is **learning to trust**. Trust in this sense refers not only to trust in others, but trust in the stability of the world around us. Clearly, the learning of trust is basic to further development. Growth and development involves risk-taking and before we are able to take

much risk and expose ourselves, we must trust that we won't be injured.

This first stage of life sharply illustrates the importance of the role that the outside world plays in human development. Trust cannot develop solely from within the individual. The adults who are central to the child's life must behave in ways that enable the child to become trusting. If central adults or the events in the child's life are extremely inconsistent, the child cannot safely trust. This interaction of the individual and society is one that goes on continuously through one's life. At every stage of development the role that society plays is as critical to a person's growth as the forces within the individual.

If trust is acquired, the child is able to move comfortably to the next stage which takes place from ages 2-4. In this stage, the task to be accomplished is **autonomy**. This issue is independence and we often see this manifested in a negative way. Children trying to attain autonomy, want and need to make up their own minds and so the 2-4 year old begins to experiment with saying "no!"

It can be easily seen that children who trust their world will have a much easier time accomplishing this task than children who have learned to mistrust. It is a very frightening step for children to begin to be different from the central adults in their lives and if they have trust in their world this task is greatly facilitated.

It is also again easy to see how important the environment is at this stage of development. If the child is not allowed any independence of thought and action, it is as detrimental to development as the results that may occur with a child who is too mistrusting to try to master independent thought and action.

Erikson says that the outcome of failure to negotiate this stage of life successfully is shame. If shame becomes entrenched as a facet of an individual's personality, it will become an issue in the person's future making it difficult for people to be different without feeling ashamed of themselves.

In the years between 4 and 6, the task is to accomplish **initiative**. A sense of autonomy is essential for the child to develop the feeling that "I can do" and the sense of purpose necessary for the adult responsibilities that allow people to fulfill their capacities. This is the stage in which children engage in role experimentation and the stretching of their capacities.

If children do not stretch their capacities and resolve the task, they experience guilt over their inability to take on responsibility. At this point, children enter school and confront the developmental crisis of leaving home for the first time and act out the role of learner. The task to be accomplished is that of **industry**. At this time, children become dissatisfied with their inability to make things well. Consequently, children learn to win recognition for productivity and to develop perseverance.

The danger at this stage is that children will become estranged from themselves and their tasks. If they have not resolved the tasks of earlier stages, they may not be ready or able to be industrious, and they will develop the sense of inferiority.

From 12-21, children are faced with the task of developing their own **identity**. The importance of the prior resolution of the task of industry at the stage particularly relates to the role career choice plays in the accomplishment of identity. This is also the time that children must acquire a well formulated sexual identity, autonomy from parents, and their own values and world view. This is the well-known "identity crisis."

At each and every stage, there is a widening of the social radius, the developmental crisis that is elicited by the necessity to manage new encounters, and a sense of estrangement since each task calls for greater differentiation and separation on the part of the individual. All of these aspects of development are at a peak during the years from 12-21, especially since the developing person is called upon for the first time to choose who she/he will be as an adult, and consequently the crisis that the individual experiences is usually severe. Failure to resolve the task leads to identity confusion. Until this task is resolved in some fashion, individuals are unclear in their pursuits and have the pervasive feeling of not knowing who they are or where they are going. Often the individual copes with the enormity of this task by becoming what parents wish. However, if the person chooses this way out, the lack of a solid sense of self persists and interferes with successful resolution of the tasks of adulthood.

It is a sense of identity that permits the individual to accomplish the life mission of integration. Up to this point each task has led to greater differentiation. A well-defined identity permits individuals to integrate the complex facets of their personality structure into a coherent and consistent pattern for future development. Consequently, failure to accomplish this task results in the even more painful reoccurrence of identity issues throughout the life-span which the adult will experience as he grows and develops.

It is important to point out at this time that the successful resolution of any one stage does not insure that the individual will master the next stage. Conversely, if the individual fails to master the task of any one stage, it does not mean that succeeding tasks cannot ever be effectively

accomplished. The result of mastery in one stage makes it easier to negotiate succeeding tasks in future stages. What is incorporated into the personality structure as a result of successful mastery are qualities of being-in-the-world that enable individuals to function effectively at the stage where they are and to move on with a greater likelihood of continued satisfactory resolutions of life's tasks. The result of failure to master a task makes the developmental passages for more difficult. The qualities of being-in-the-world that are incorporated into the personality structure are qualities that make effective functioning difficult but not necessarily impossible. However, the likelihood of satisfactory resolution is greatly reduced. The negative qualities that become incorporated as part of the personality structure become themes and issues in the person's life that emerge over and over again in their interactions with the world just as successful resolution leads one to incorporate positive qualities that enhance one's interactions. However, even with successful resolution, we as adults often have to face and master the tasks of prior stages. Each time we take a new job, move into a new community, or when we marry, we often move through all the stages again in a telescoped fashion.

As we move into the adult stages, the successful resolution of the previous stages of development that end with an integration of the personality through the formation of an identity, prepares us for the stages to come.

In the remainder of this chapter, the adult stages will be discussed, and the importance of these earlier developmental stages in adult life will be explored. In addition to the five stages in the life cycle that occur in childhood and adolescence, Erikson outlined the following stages in the life cycle.

Young Adulthood - Intimacy vs. Isolation

Middle Age - Generativity vs. Stagnation

Maturity - Integrity vs. Despair

In young adulthood, people must first begin to feel more secure in the identities; they then become able to establish **intimacy** with themselves (in their inner life) and with others. This is the case both in friendship and eventually in a love-based mutually satisfying sexual relationship. In addition to establishing a mutually satisfying sexual relationship, the issues in establishing intimacy with another person involve learning to share financial goals, ideas, friends, and emotions. It is the successful establishment of this sharing that enables one to achieve intimacy. When people cannot enter wholly into an intimate relationship because of the fear of losing their identities, they may, according to Erikson, develop a sense of isolation.

It is out of the intimacies of adulthood that **generativity** becomes the task of middle age. Generativity may be defined as the mature person's interest in establishing, caring for, and guiding the next generation. It involves establishing a family, creating a life's work into which one will

mentor the next generation. Lack of achieving this task frequently results in self-absorption and frequently in a pervading sense of stagnation and interpersonal impoverishment.

In the final life stage the task is one of achieving **integrity**. It is posited that people who have achieved a satisfying intimacy with other human beings and who have been able to adapt well to the disappointments as well as the triumphs of their generative activities as a parent or co-worker will reach maturity and approach the end of life with integrity. This is an acceptance of their own responsibility for what their life is and was. This involves the development of a sense of ideological commitment and a sense of life as being worthwhile. It is also important during this period that we achieve a sense of satisfaction with the way we have lived and with our own unique achievements. Finally, the accomplishment of integrity leads one to pass on hope to future generations. Failure to negotiate this task of achieving integrity successfully can and often does end in a preoccupation with dying and a pervasive sense of despair and depression for the old person.

Fifteen years after Erikson first promulgated the eight life stages that we have discussed, Gruen (1964) tried a unique method of judging the status of adults by redefining all eight of Erickson's stages to fit adult behavior.

According to Gruen, adults who have successfully resolved the life task of establishing trust will be those who have confidence in self and in the world in general. This individual likes work associates, friends, relatives and feels essentially optimistic about people and their motives. The adult who distrusts people, who prefers to be alone because friends get you in trouble, who is unable to confide in anyone, and who distrusts self and the world in general has not successfully resolved the trust task.

Adults who have successfully mastered the task of autonomy hold attitudes and ways of doing things which can be described as their "own way" as opposed to having attitudes and working in certain ways because others expect them to. These people are not afraid to do what they like or to hold opinions which may not be popular or in the mainstream. On the other hand, adults who have not successfully negotiated this life stage appear to be self-conscious about their own ideas and ways of doing things. Thus we find people who stick with their own ideas and ways of doing things. Also, we find people who stick with the "tried and true" ways and often do not assert themselves against group pressures. These people also focus on being like others and acting like others, thus exhibiting the development of **doubt**.

The task of the third life stage is initiative, and the adult who has successfully negotiated this task takes pleasure in planning and initiating action. These people are able to plan ahead, design their own schedule, and are often described at work as the "self starters." An unsuccessful

resolution of the task results in **guilt**, and we find adults who are likely to play down success or accomplishment and who prefer and allow others to initiate action and are followers.

When there is successful resolution of the task of industry, we find adults who like to make things, carry things out to completion, strive for skill mastery, and have pride in accomplishment and production. When unsuccessfully resolved, adults will be passive, leave things undone, and will feel inadequate about their ability to do things or to produce work.

The last task of childhood and adolescence, which is **identity** when resolved, results in an adult who exhibits strongly defined social roles. This individual, in Gruen's work, is described as "being at home" in work, family, sex role, and in affiliations. This is the type of person who has a sense of belonging and who enjoys carrying out role behavior. Adults who have resolved the task of identity will also enjoy their daily activities and style of life, be definite about self, and about who they are. A sense of continuity with past and present is likewise revealed when we talk to these adults. When the task of identity is not resolved, adults exhibit a great deal of role diffusion and are often ill at ease in roles. They are often lost in groups and affiliations and lack conviction in required role behavior. In career, such a person may experience radical shifts in work without meaning or purpose. In extreme cases, we see the adult who leads an almost nomadic existence, shifting residence frequently and seemingly, without direction.

Gruen's redefinitions of the tasks of the adult stages suggest that when adults successfully resolve the task of intimacy, they will likely have close and intimate relationships with spouse and with friends, will be successful in sharing thoughts with them, enjoy spending time with them, and also readily and genuinely express warm feelings for associates, friends, spouse, and children. Unsuccessful accomplishment of this task finds the adult living relatively isolated from friends and family. Relationships tend to be superficial, and intimate contact with other people is avoided. Sometimes the adult who has not successfully mastered the task of intimacy is indiscriminately sociable or very absorbed in self, and often relationships with people are stereotyped or formalized.

Adults, who have successfully mastered the task of generativity, exhibit a strong sense of continuity with future generations, are able to develop and carry out plans for the future that require sustained application, and utilize their skills and abilities. Often these adults will invest their energy into new ideas or ventures. An unsuccessful conclusion of the task, according to Gruen's model, will produce the kind of adult who in the middle years is likely to do nothing more than the ordinary routines of work and necessary daily activities. We often see that these people are preoccupied with self and in extreme cases seem to be vegetating in their personal and interrelational lives.

In the last stage of the adult life cycle, the task to be accomplished is that of integrity. Successful accomplishment of this task finds adults who are satisfied and happy with their lives and how they have lived them. These individuals find happiness in how their work has gone, in accomplishments, and in productivity. It is easy to see that such an individual has maximized successes and has accepted responsibility for life. The person who has not successfully negotiated this stage of the life cycle is the older adult whose feelings about life are ones of depression and unhappiness. Often these individuals appear not to accept their present age or their mode of living. Such persons frequently will be identified as living in the past. They fear getting older, and they fear death. When confronted with the task, they react in despair and always say that they would change their lives and/or careers and live them differently if they could have another chance.

Gruen rated 108 men and women between the age of 40 and 65 on his redefined eight life stages. Although he did not find that these adults were systematically different at a later stage than younger people, there did seem to be some justification for Erikson's assumptions of sequentiality of stages. Highest correlations were found between adjacent stages so that, for example, an adult who scored low (does not successfully negotiate the task) on identity would also be likely to score low (not successfully negotiate the task) on intimacy.

There is a lack of much additional research on Erikson's theory of age related life stages. The bipolarity of the stages, as Erikson presented them, makes research difficult. However, there are intriguing questions to be raised from his work, such as the possibility of ebb and flow in one life stage that may induce consequent ebbs and flows in later life stages and at various turning points in life. Recently, Erikson edited a new publication entitled **Adulthood**, which illuminates this notion in one stirring essay. This essay, "Reflections on Dr. Borg's Life Cycle," presents a conception of the life cycle and the generational cycle. He utilizes a memoir technique that begins with the end of a man's life span and demonstrates how a significant moment in old age reaches back through a man's un-

resolved adulthood to the dim beginning of his awareness as a child.

In the essay a number of the assumptions about adult life that will be confronted later in this monograph are examined. These include:

1. Adult life unfolds in sequence and in stages, and each stage is marked by a crisis, a turning point, a crucial period of both vulnerability and potential.

2. At crisis points whether we progress or fall back, the result is that the future is substantially different.

3. Each period in the adult stages of the life cycle has specific tasks to be engaged in. When these are successfully engaged, we move on.

4. An adult's life involves: a) membership in the culture (jobs, class, family, society), b) how individual values, aspirations, and goals are being met or frustrated by participation in the world.

5. Crucial shifts of growth occur with our inner realm. How we feel about marker events (graduation, marriage, childbirth, jobs, divorce) — whether we come to grips with them or avoid them determines if we move on or stagnate.

6. Engaging change is scary and unsettling. Regression, accommodation, and integration of change characterize passage.

7. Growth will occur if the challenge slightly exceeds individuals' present coping skills so that they can stretch yet not be overwhelmed and forced to retreat to safer ground.

In Chapter II, we will review the work of Daniel Levinson, who has presented some new findings in adult developmental theory. These findings support the concept of specific age-linked phases that every adult man must pass through and which underlie his personal crises, govern his emotional states and attitudes, and shape his behavior.

DANIEL LEVINSON: To Every Man's Life, Many Seasons

Early Adult Era

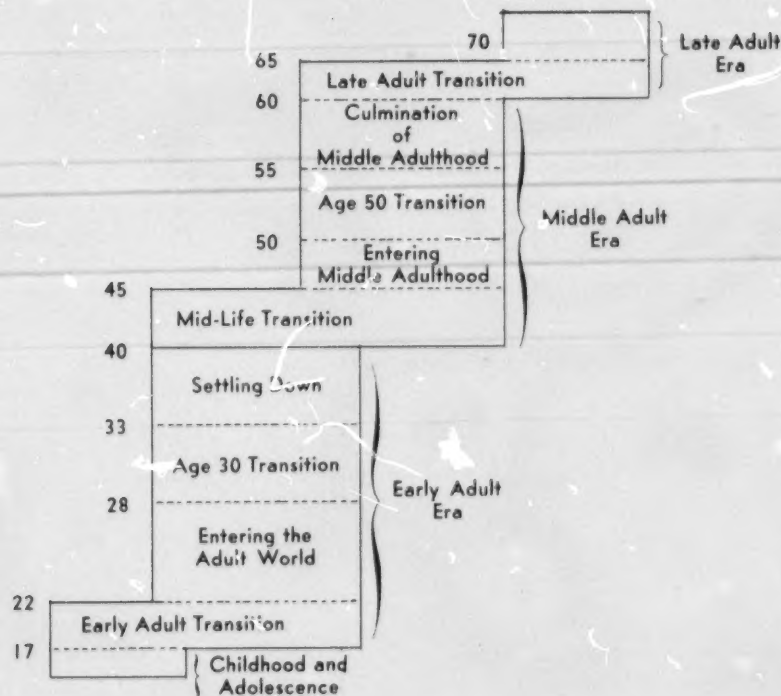
There is a growing desire in our society to see adulthood as something more than a long, featureless stretch of years with childhood at one end and senility at the other. Gradually, the reluctance to study the course of adult life is being overcome. The question "Is there life after youth?" is receiving the resounding answer of "Yes, indeed!"

One of the most intriguing volumes in the recent literature on adult development, which deals with how human beings continue to change throughout their lifetimes, according to an age-linked timetable, is the work of Daniel Levinson. Levinson, a professor of Psychology at Yale University, worked with a team of other psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists during a four-year period from 1970 to 1974. His research was culminated with the publication of his book, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. This work is based in part on intensive longterm interviewing of 40 selected men (10 executives, 10 biologists, 10 factory workers, and 10 novelists), all of whom were in the age range from 35 to 45. In this study, each man was seen 6 to

10 times for a total of 10 to 20 hours over a period of two to three months. There was a single follow-up interview with most of the men about two years after the initial interviews. From these data, Levinson and his associates have constructed a theory of adult male development over the age span 20 to 45 (the early adult era to the time of the mid-life transition) and began some speculative consideration of the middle and late adult eras. Although Levinson's work was exclusively with a male population, other recent research indicates that the generalization regarding life-stage development, which is age-linked, applies to women as well. The onset of the stages may not occur on the same schedule as they do for men.

Since Levinson's interest was in men, however, more specific reference to women's life-stage development will be covered in later chapters of this monograph.

We will be investigating in some depth the developmental periods that take place over the life course based upon Levinson's research. Therefore it will be helpful to begin with the schematic shown below so that it can be referred to when necessary for clarification.



Like Erikson, Levinson assumes that there is something we can call adult development, that there is a psychosocial evolution just as in childhood and adolescence, and that we cannot understand adults and the changes they go through in their lives if we do not have a conception of what is intrinsic to adulthood. We can then see how derivatives of childhood operate to facilitate or hinder certain kinds of development.

As Levinson conceives the adult developmental periods, their origins lie both in the nature of man as a bio-social and bio-psychological organism and in the nature of society as an enduring multigenerational form of collective life. The periods are not merely internal unfoldings vis-à-vis the Piagetian stages of childhood development. Neither do they simply represent stages in a career sequence as shaped by an occupational, educational, or familial system.

In other words the periods of adult development are not simply a function of adult socializing systems, although these systems play an important part in defining time-tables and in shaping one's course through them. There are, it seems, a wide variety of biological, psychodynamic, cultural, social-structural, and other timetables that characterize adult development periods and that operate in a system of partial synchronization.

We will look at some illustrative concepts, findings, and areas of exploration drawn from Levinson's research that define the early adult era. These include:

1. leaving the family
2. getting into the adult world and leading up to . . .
3. settling down
4. becoming one's own man (BOOM) . . . that leads up to the developmental transition known as the mid-life transition

LEAVING THE FAMILY - Leaving the family is a period of transition between adolescent life, centered in the family of origin, and entry into the adult world. In the population that Levinson and his associates studied, this phase occupied a span of from 3 to 5 years starting at the age 17 or 18 and ending at age 20 through 24. Levinson uses the term Early Adult Transition (reference the schematic) in the sense that the person is half in and half out of the family: he is making an effort to separate himself from the family, to develop a new home base, to reduce dependency or familial support and authority, and to regard himself as an adult making his way in the adult world.

There are external and internal aspects associated with leaving the family. In the external aspects, such changes as moving out of the family home, becoming financially less dependent, getting into new roles in which one is more autonomous and responsible are noted. In its internal as-

pects, an increase in self-parent differentiation and in psychological distance from the family occurs. From the point of view of ego development, the young man is in the stage that Erikson labeled Identity vs. Role Diffusion.

Ordinarily, leaving the family begins around the end of high school. For those who enter college or the military, there is a new institutional life situation which in many respects is intermediate between the family and a full adult life in the community. For those who move directly from high school into the labor force — the usual case within the working class population, there is no institutional matrix to shape the transition into adult life. Such young men may continue to live at home for several years (semi-boarder status). They lead their own lives yet in some ways remain subject to parental authority and integrated within the family network. Often the young man will work with his father or relatives during this period. If he marries, he may live for some time with one spouse's parents.

The initial work history has the same transitional character. The young man may for several years have no genuine occupation. He may work at various jobs and acquire a variety of skills and even though economically self-sufficient and living on his own, he is still on the cusp between the family and the fully adult world. Getting across this boundary is the major developmental task.

The leaving the family period ends, according to Levinson, when the balance shifts, when the man has for the most part separated from the family and has begun to make a place for himself in the adult world. (It must be noted that further work in separation-connectedness in relation to family, continues for many years and for some, forever.)

GETTING INTO THE ADULT WORLD AND THE AGE 30 TRANSITION — The period which Levinson refers to as getting into the adult world begins when the center of gravity of one's life shifts from the family origins to a new home base accompanied by an effort to form an adult life of one's own. This period, which starts in the early 20s, extends roughly to age 27 through 29. It is a time of exploration and provisional commitment to adult roles, memberships, responsibilities, and relationships. A young man at this stage tries to establish an occupation or career direction, consistent with his interests, values, and sense of self. He will engage in adult friendships, sexual relationships, and begin to work on what Erikson termed the ego stage of Intimacy vs. Aloneness.

The developmental task of this period is to explore the available possibilities of the adult world, arrive at an initial definition of oneself as an adult, and fashion an initial life structure which will provide a viable link between the valued self and the wider adult world. The concept of life structure is central here. There are external and internal aspects associated with this concept. Externally, life structure refers to the individual's overall pattern of interests, memberships, condition and style of life, long term goals, in short, how the person is "plugged into

society." Internally, life structure includes the personal meanings these have for the individual as well as the inner identities, core values, fantasies, and psychodynamic qualities that shape and infuse one's engagement in the world and are to some degree fulfilled and changed by it. Levinson uses the concept of life structure to provide an initial focus on the boundary between individual and society and from this base to move outward to a fuller examination of the social world and inward to a fuller examination of the personality.

During the period of getting into the adult world, Levinson uncovered some patterned sequences.

a. In the most frequent pattern, we find men who make a provisional commitment to an occupation and go through the initial stages of a career. Then somewhere in the interval between ages 28 and 32, he will enter a transitional period during which he works on questions as "Shall I make a deeper commitment to this occupation and build a stable life structure around it?" or "I still have a chance to change; shall I take it?" There is a kind of bet being made here, a hold the cards vs. drawing new ones, and if so, how many? Some have referred to this as the age 30 transition. However, it is important to note that many of Levinson's subjects did not make changes and remained in the same occupation initially chosen in their 20s, reaffirmed existing marriages, and entered the period of "settling down."

b. In a second pattern, the man at approximately age 30 decides that his initial occupation choice was not the right one, that it is too constraining or is a violation or betrayal of an early dream which now must be pursued — or, in some cases, that he does not have the talent to succeed in his initial occupational choice. He draws cards to the limit — and makes a major shift in occupation and in life structure — sometimes including marriage. In this pattern, less often seen in Levinson's population, the man makes a provisional structure in his 20s and a moderate or sometimes drastic change at about 30.

c. Another variation or pattern is the man who during his 20s lives a rather transient, unsettled life. Often he feels a desperate need at 30 to get more order and stability into his life. Levinson offers this hypothesis "If a man does not reach a significant start toward settling down by about age 34, his chances of forming a reasonably satisfying life structure and one that can evolve in his further development are quite small."

A concept of great value in the analysis of this stage is the "dream." Many men (not all, however) enter adulthood with a dream or vision of their own future. The dream is usually articulated within an occupational context. Where such a dream exists, we explore its nature and vicissitudes over the life course. Major shifts in life's direction at subsequent ages are often occasioned by a reactivation of the sense of betrayal or compromise of the dream. That is to say very often in the crises that occur

at age 30, 40, or even later, a major issue is the reactivation of a guiding dream, frequently one that goes back to the early 20s and the concern with its failure.

Another, or second crucial concept that Levinson and his associates explore throughout is that of the **transition**, in this case, the link between the termination of getting into the adult world and the onset of the next period. Levinson attempts to be very specific about age linkages in order to counteract the strong tendency to assume that in adulthood very little is age-linked because development isn't occurring. He is tenacious in pursuing his belief that age linkages are stronger than have been recognized.

The age 30 transition and others like it at different points in the life course may occasion considerable turmoil, confusion, and struggle with the environment and within the self, or it may involve a more quiet reassessment and intensification of effort. But it clearly is marked by important changes in life structure and internal commitments which presage the next stage of development — "settling down."

For further amplification of the concepts presented in this section, Chapters 7 and 8 in Levinson's book, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, offer case studies — "The Life of James Tracey, executive (Part I)" and "The Life of William Paulsen, worker." These case studies help to give the reader a feel for "how it is" in the experience of people in the early adult era.

Settling Down

The "settling down" period has multifaceted meanings. One aspect of this period is that of order, stability, security, and control. It is a time when a man establishes his niche in society, it is characterized by digging in, building, striving, moving onward and upward, and having an inner timetable that contains major goals and way stations and ages by which they must be reached. Examples would be:

- The executive who has to get into the corporate structure and earn \$50,000 per year plus by age 40.
- The professor who has to get tenure by age 40.
- The writer who must deliver the great novel by age 40.

These, then, are the two aspects of "settling down." One aspect has more to do with up — mobility and ambition; the other has more to do with down — in an order. In opposite or contrast, antithetically to both of these, is the disposition to be free, unfettered, not tied to any structure no matter how great its current satisfaction or how alluring its future promise and to be always open to new possibilities and to quest in all directions. The surge of this disposition is seen in the present

state of our society. In the men studied by Levinson, this disposition was not predominant during the early part of the "settling down" period, but it frequently appeared toward the end of the period.

According to Levinson, the "settling down" period lasts until the late 30s or early 40s when various external and internal changes bring on new developments that will be discussed a bit later in this chapter.

Levinson notes a few major characteristics of the "settling down" period. In creating an integrated life structure, one can utilize only parts of one's self, and this means that important parts of the self are left out. A myth, supported by most theories of pre-adult development is that at the end of adolescence, you "get yourself together", and as a normal, mature adult, you enter into a stable, integrated life pattern which continues on, more or less indefinitely.

This is an illusion and a cruel one at that because it leads people as early adults to believe that they are (or should be) fully adult and settled, and that there are no major developmental changes and crises ahead. The structure that the individual creates in the "settling down" period cannot fulfill all of one's self. Parts of the self, therefore, are repressed or lie dormant, and at some point (the next transition point perhaps) the life structure must be enlarged, reformed, or radically restructured in order to express more of the self.

A reason why the "settling down" structure must change is that it is based to some degree upon illusions:

- about the importance and meaning of achieving one's occupational goals
- about one's relationships with significant other human beings
- about what it is one truly wants in life.

A de-illusioning process (the redirection or removal of illusions) is an important aspect of post "settling down" development. For example, Levinson's subjects in the early "settling down" period tended to regard themselves as highly autonomous. He makes his own way; he is not a child any longer; his parents do not tell him what to do; he is on his own. One of the illusions is that he is in fact freed of tribal influences. In fact, however, the ambitions and goal-seeking behavior of the 30s are very much tied into tribal influences. We seek, to large degree, what institutions and other reference groups important to us are helping us to define. We may be more free of our parents, but we find or invent others who guide us — protect us — tell us what to do, and in Levinson's schema, toward the end of the "settling down" period, a new step is taken.

Levinson calls this step BOOM (becoming one's own man). It is not a separate period but rather a time of peaking, a culmination of the "settling down" period and connecting link to the mid-life transition. The BOOM time tends to occur in the late 30s in the sample of men studied by Levinson, and it represents the high point of early adulthood, an ending point, and also a new beginning towards what lies beyond. A key element at this time is the man's feeling that no matter what he has accomplished to date, he is not sufficiently his own man. It is a time when he feels overly dependent upon and constrained by persons who have authority over him or who exert great influence upon him. The novelists in Levinson's sample felt unduly intimidated by their publishers or too vulnerable to the evaluation of certain critics. The executives suddenly found that their superiors who had in the past been supportive and encouraging now control too much and delegate too little. Many in the sample anxiously awaited the time when they would have the authority to make their own decisions — carry their own mail so to speak — and get the company really going, turn the hot boiler into a cutting-edge operation. The academicians believed that once they achieved tenure they would finally be free of all of the restraints and demands that they had been acquiescing to since the days of graduate school, in Levinson's words "The illusions die hard!"

This sense of constraint and oppression often occurs in other arenas than work, such as in marriage and other relationships. The ruptured marriage as a product of the mid-life transition is well-documented in the literature of the early and mid-1970s. Another relationship that Levinson studied and about which he was greatly impressed and intrigued was the role of the mentor. Levinson uses the term mentor in the complex psychosocial sense rather than in the purely external sense of advisor, teacher, and protector. The presence or absence of mentors was found to be a very important component of the adult life course up into the 30s. Individuals who exhibited an absence of mentors in their life were found to demonstrate various kinds of developmental impairments, and in mid-life, problems of individualization are noted.

The mentor is ordinarily 8 to 15 years older than the mentee — that is old enough to represent greater wisdom, authority, and paternal qualities but near enough in age or attitudes to be in many respects a peer or older brother. The mentor may be a teacher, boss, or an experienced co-worker. The mentoring process involves being taken under wing, being invited into the occupational world and shown around receiving the imported wisdom of the mentor and the care, the sponsorship and criticism. Best of all is the bestowal of a blessing. The teaching has value, but the blessing is the crucial element.

The younger man in turn feels appreciation, admiration, gratitude, love, and identification. The mentoring relationship is lovely for a while but usually ends in separation, which arises from a quarrel, a change in circumstances, sometimes by death. It is after the separation that the

processes of internalization are enhanced for as Levinson points out, internalization is increased by loss, and the personality of the mentee is enriched when he makes the valued qualities of the mentor more fully a part of himself. So, in some respects the main value of the relationship is created after it is terminated — a sad thought — but tempered by the knowledge that the value is only created if there was something of high worth there when it was happening.

Levinson reports that the number of mentor relationships which a man has in his life does not vary widely. Few men have more than three, and the modal number is more likely none or one. The duration of the intense mentor relationship is also not extremely variable, perhaps three to four years as an average. (Levinson, however, does report an upper limit in some instances of ten to twelve years.)

When the mentoring relationship ends, a more modest friendship may develop after a period of cooling off. Some mentoring relationships end rather peaceably with gradual loss of involvement. But far more often and especially during the 30s, termination occurs after a period of increasing conflict — bringing in its wake intense feeling of bitterness, anger, grief, and abandonment in the mentor or in both and finally rejuvenation in the mentee.

Giving up the mentor relationship is a part of becoming one's own man, and the final giving up of mentors by those who have had them tends to occur in the middle or late 30s. Levinson points out flatly "one does not have mentors after age 40." One does have friendships and significant working relationships after age 40, but not mentors.

The mentor relationship enables the young man to relate as an adult with another man who regards him as an adult, one who welcomes him into the adult world on a relatively mutual and equal basis. The relationship is finally rejected because the man is ready to take further step in becoming his own man: to give up being a son in the little boy sense and a young man in the apprentice-disciple-mentee sense and to move toward assuming more fully functions such as father and peer in relation to other adults, to become in a sense a mentor. It is this kind of developmental achievement that is the essence of adulthood. Levinson points out that it is probably impossible to become a mentor without first having been a mentee.

Relationships of this kind are likely to be of crucial importance in initiating and working on the ego stage of generativity versus stagnation and its attendant virtue, caring (for adults), which we discussed in detail in Chapter I. Erikson identified the generativity stage as:

- beginning around 40
- involving one's relationship to future generations in general

- involving one's relationship to the next generation of adults in particular.

This goes beyond caring about one's small children, which is ordinarily learned in the 20s. The issue at this stage is caring about adults, being generative in relation to adults, taking responsibility in the adult world, and getting over being a boy in the adult world. Levinson and others point out that men cannot get very far with this before age 40 and that the BCOM time of the late 30s is the beginning of work on it.

It is during this time that a man wants desperately to be affirmed by society. In the roles that he values most, he is trying for recognition (in work, the crucial promotion). At about age 40 to 42, most of the subjects in Levinson's research fixed up some key event in their careers as carrying the ultimate message of affirmation or devaluation by society. The event in many cases was a promotion or new job; it becomes of crucial importance whether one becomes vice president of a company, full professor in a department, or foreman or union steward. Some times the event involves a form of symbolic success — writing a best seller, being recognized as an executive or craftsman of the first rank. To most of the men in Levinson's research, the event was given a magical quality. So, if the outcome is favorable, then all is well and the future is assured. If unfavorable, then not only his work but also his personhood has been found wanting and without value.

The course and outcome of the key event is a process of unfolding; often it takes about six years so that many men in their early 40s seem to be living in a state of suspended animation. During the course of the waiting, the next period known as the midlife transition gets underway followed by the period of restabilization and the early period of middle adulthood.

For a more complete discussion of the "settling down" period and BOOM and a clear presentation of five sequences, i.e., ways of going through the period and understanding of what its outcomes are, the reader should review Chapter 10 in Levinson's book, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. Also recommended are Chapters 11 and 12, which are case studies: "The Life of James Tracy, Executive (II)" and "The Life of Paul Namson, Novelist."

The Mid-Life Transition

At around age 40 a new period gets under way. It is called the mid-life transition, lasts about five years for most men, and serves as a bridge between early adulthood and middle adulthood. As in all transitions a man must come to terms with the past and prepare for the future.

Levinson discusses three major tasks of the mid-life transition, which must be worked on:

- The task of terminating the era of early adulthood.

(A review of his life during this era and a reappraisal of what he had done with it.)

- The task of taking the first steps toward the initiation of middle adulthood. (Although not yet ready to start building a new life structure, he begins to modify the negative elements of the present structure to test new choices.)
- The task of dealing with the polarities that are sources of deep division in his life.

The first task may be more simply entitled reappraising the past. The major job is a reappraisal of the life structure of the "settling down" period, a period which was discussed in detail earlier in this chapter. A man's review of the past goes on in the shadows of the future. His need to reconsider the past arises in large part from a heightened awareness of his mortality and a wish to use the time remaining to live more wisely.

The life structure itself now comes into question. It becomes important to ask "What have I done with my life?" What do I really get from and give to my wife, children, friends, work, community, and self? "What is it I truly want for myself and others?", "What are my central values, and how are they reflected in my life?", "What are my greatest talents, and how am I using (or wasting) them?", "What have I done with my early 'dream', and what do I want with it now?", "Can I live in a way that combines my current desires, values, and talents?", "How satisfactory is my present life structure — how suitable for the self, how viable in the world — and how shall I change it to provide a better basis for the future?"

As a man attempts to reappraise his life, he discovers how much it has been based upon illusions, and he is faced with the task of reducing them, that is to say, recognizing that longheld beliefs and assumptions about self and world are not true. The period of early adulthood provided a fertile ground for illusions. Now in the period of the mid-life transition, the process of losing or reducing the illusions involves diverse feelings — disappointment, joy, relief, bitterness, grief, to name just a few, and it has diverse outcomes. A man may feel bereft and have the experience of suffering an irreparable loss. He may also feel liberated, free to develop more flexible values and to admire others in a more genuine, less idealized way.

The second task of the mid-life transition involves modifying the life structure. As the transition proceeds, the emphasis gradually shifts from past to future. A man must make choices that will modify the existing life structure and provide the central elements for a new one. He begins to plan for the next phase to make a commitment of new choices and to embark upon a new pattern of existence. The transition then ends, and the new period, that of middle adulthood, begins.

Some men make very drastic changes in the external aspects of the life structure during the mid-life transition. Some of the more significant changes include divorce, remarriage, major shifts in occupation, notable progress in creativity, or a marked decline in level of functioning.

Other men make fewer changes and tend to "stay put" during the mid-life transition; they stay in the same marriage or career, etc. Levinson, however, claimed that a closer look revealed important although less obvious changes; his marital relationship is different; his children are growing up; his parents have died or have become more dependent, and this has considerable impact upon his role as son and family member.

To this point we have briefly looked at external changes in the life structure of man during the mid-life transition. There are also significant changes in the internal aspects of a man's life structure. He works on various developmental issues that have a special urgency at mid-life. He may change appreciably in social outlook or in personal values, in what he wants to give to the world, and in what he wants to be for himself. The inner changes may be quite blatant and expressed openly, or they may be hidden or subtle.

Levinson points out that a primary task of the mid-life transition is to modify the life structure of the 20s and create the basis for a new structure appropriate to middle adulthood. The final test of the developmental work done here (as in all transition periods) is the degree to which the life structure emerging from it is satisfactory. Whatever the nature of the developmental work done and however modest or profound the structural changes wrought, the individual's life in the mid 40s will differ in crucial respects from that of the late 30s. A more complete treatment of the changes occurring in various elements of the life structure can be found in Chapter 16 of Levinson's book, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*.

The third task of the mid-life transition is that of individuation. This occurs in each of the key transition periods of the life cycle. It is a term which refers to the changes in a person's relationship to himself and to the external world. Each transition period — infancy, pubescence, early adult, mid-life reveal individuation in which the person forms a clearer boundary between self and world — a stronger sense of who he is and what he wants and a more realistic sophisticated view of the world. Greater individuation allows the individual to be more separate from the world and to be more independent and self-generating, and it also gives him confidence and understanding to have more intense attachments in the world and feel more fully a part of it.

Every developmental transition, Levinson points out, involves termination and initiation: termination of an existing life structure and the initiation of a new one. This is only accomplished when a person reappraises and modifies the existing life structure. This is a very challenging,

very difficult job, and perhaps it would be impossible if individuation were not simultaneously playing a role. In a transition period individuation is the underlying process that links termination and initiation. It prepares the inner ground, lays an internal basis in which the past can be partially given up and the future begun.

After the early adult transition, which was discussed earlier, the next great opportunity for developmental work on individuation is the mid-life transition. In this period a man must modify the early adult self (including as it does, the baggage of unresolved issues from childhood and adolescence) and the life structure of the late 30s. Greater individuation is needed if a man is to form a life structure more appropriate for middle adulthood.

We will look now at the most significant changes to be made in mid-life individuation. Most of the researchers and investigators emphasize a single facet in the progress. Erikson gives primary emphasis to Generativity vs. Stagnation as a stage of ego development in the middle years. Elliott Jacques (1979) reported that the central issue at mid-life is coming to terms with one's own mortality; a man must learn now, more deeply than was possible before, that his own death is inevitable and that he and others are capable of great destructiveness. Bernice Neugarten (1976) identified the basic mid-life change as a growing "interiority"; turning inward to the self, decreasing the emphasis on assertiveness and mastery of the environment, enjoying the process of living more than the attainment of specific goals.

Carl Jung first proposed the distinctions between the first and second half of life with the years around 40 as the median. He identified a new effort at individuation beginning at midlife and continuing through the remaining years. Jung identified many facets of the individuation process.

Levinson stands a course somewhere between the single factor emphasis of investigators as Jacques and Neugarten and the tremendously complex approach of Jung and discusses four tasks of mid-life individuation. For a given individual some of these may be more problematic or more conspicuous than others, but all are present, and all must be considered in a general understanding of adult development. Each task requires a man to confront and reintegrate a polarity — that is, a pair of tendencies or states that are usually experienced as polar opposites, as if a person must be one or the other and cannot be both. As he becomes more individuated in middle adulthood, a man partly overcomes the divisions and integrates the polarities.

The four polarities whose resolution is the principal task of mid-life individuation are:

1. Young/Old
2. Destruction/Creation

3. Masculine/Feminine

4. Attachment/Separateness

Looking at these polarities superficially, it appears that a person must be one or the other and cannot be both. In actuality, the paired tendencies are not mutually exclusive. Both sides of each polarity co-exist within every self. At mid-life, a man feels young in many respects, but he also has a sense of being old. He feels older than youth but not ready to join the generation defined as "middle aged." His developmental task is to make sense of this condition of in-between and to become young/old in a new way.

The destruction/creation polarity also presents problems of conflict and reintegration. The mid-life transition activates a man's concerns with death and destruction; he experiences more fully his own mortality. He becomes more aware of the ways in which other persons, even his loved ones, have acted destructively toward him. Perhaps worse, he realizes that he has done irrevocably hurtful things to his parents, lovers, wife, children, friends and rivals. At the same time he has a strong desire to become more creative: to create products that have value for himself and others and to contribute more fully to the coming generations in society. It is in middle adulthood that a man can come to know more than ever before that powerful forces of destructiveness and of creativity co-exist in the human soul — in his soul — and that they may be integrated in new ways.

Every man at mid-life also comes more fully to terms with the co-existence of masculine and feminine parts of the self, and he must integrate his powerful need for attachment to others with his antithetical but just as urgent and important need for separateness.

These polarities while not specific to the mid-life transition operate at this time with special force. It was pointed out earlier that every developmental transition presents the opportunity and the necessity of moving toward a new integration of each polarity. To the degree that a man can do this, he will create a firmer basis for his life in the ensuing phase. To the extent that he fails, he forms inner contradictions that will be reflected in the flaws of the next life structure. Levinson tells us that it is human both to succeed and to fail in these tasks: even as we resolve old conflicts and reach new integrations, we also create the contradictions that will in time stimulate further change and development.

The mid-life transition is also a developmental crisis. While Levinson found in the group that he studied that some of the men did very little questioning or searching during the mid-life transition, for a great majority, about 80 percent of his subjects, the period evolved tumultuous struggles within the self and the external world. For this group their mid-life transition was a time of severe crisis with every aspect of their lives coming to be questioned,

and they were horrified by much that was revealed; consequently, they were full of recriminations against themselves and others.

Because a man in this crisis is often somewhat irrational, others may regard him as "sick." In most cases he is not, and the desire to question and modify his life stems from the most healthy part of the self. The doubting and searching are appropriate to this period. The real question is how best to make use of them. The problem is compounded by the fact that the process of reappraisal activates unconscious conflicts — the unconscious baggage carried forward from hard times in the past which hinders

the effort to change. According to Levinson and others who have written of this phenomenon, the pathology is not in the desire to improve one's life but in the obstacles to pursuing this aim. It is the pathological anxiety and guilt, the dependencies, animosities and vanities of earlier years that keep a man from examining the real issues at mid-life and make it hard for him to modify an oppressive life structure.

Readers interested in a case study of a male mid-life transition are referred to Levinson, Chapter 17, "The Life of John Barnes, Biologist."

GAIL SHEEHY: Men and Women - Alone and Together

Gail Sheehy began her investigation of Adult Development as a result of the passage through a life crisis of her own. After nearly being killed while working as a reporter and covering an assignment in Ireland when she was 35, she discovered that she was immobilized by the fear of her own death and by the fear that she was not contributing sufficiently to society. When she discovered that her old coping skills from childhood no longer worked, (turning on the light, i.e., getting knowledge that some curable "thing" was causing her panic, calling in someone strong to save her, or pretending nothing was wrong through keeping busy) she was forced to work through her crisis and restructure her life.

After experiencing the mid-life transition that we have been discussing heretofore in such a turbulent manner, she became anxious to learn what adult development was all about. She accepted a fellowship from the Alicia Patterson Foundation and began a full-time study of adult development which culminated in the book: **Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Development**. For this book she decided on the three following objectives:

1. to understand and to communicate to the lay public the inner changes that people make as they grow,
2. to compare the developmental rhythms of men and women,
3. to examine the predictable crises for couples.

To accomplish these objectives, Sheehy extensively studied the lives of 115 people of middle-class backgrounds. She chose a middle-class population for several reasons. First, an investigator in a new area of research must choose a group that is homogeneous, that is, share major characteristics so that one may more easily see the consistent patterns and also identify the inconsistencies. A second reason was the well-documented notion that people in this group of society become the carriers of our social values. Sheehy points out that it takes about five years for new life patterns, ideas, and attitudes that emerge in the middle class to become apparent in the working class. Finally, Sheehy chose this group because its members have the greatest number of options and the least number of obstacles to choosing how they will live their lives.

From her research, Sheehy conceptualized adult development as taking place in six distinct stages, each marked by a crisis point and not unlike those that Levinson postulated:

Pulling Up Roots
The Trying Twenties
Catch 30
Rooting and Extending
The Deadline Decade
Renewal or Resignation

Looking at the life of women, Sheehy observed that there are more outer restrictions and inner contradictions for women during the first half of life than there are later. Consequently, much of the focus of her research during this period focused on women's early development and the relationship between couples.

Sheehy believes, as do Erikson and Levinson, that we move through a series of life stages of development that are marked by predictable crises. There are four areas of perception that are changed during each one of these predictable passages. First, our interior sense of self in relationship to others changes -- we see ourselves in relationship to others in a new way. Second is the proportion of safety to danger that we feel in our life -- we feel that there is far more danger in our life than safety during a passage and our safety often feels like it is slipping away. Third our perception of time also changes during a passage. At a developmental plateau, we feel as if we have plenty of time while during a passage, we tend to feel as though time were running out on us. Finally, there is a shift in our sense of aliveness or stagnation. It is these background sensations that tend to act as a complex, interrelated set of motivators in shaping the decisions to change our lives.

Sheehy also agrees with Erikson and Levinson that change is not only desirable, but that it is necessary to change and restructure our lives if we are to grow successfully into adults that find fulfillment and satisfaction. In addition, she takes care to point out that our personal development is not only affected by age stage and gender, but also by generation and social change.

It is her belief that the central issues and tasks of one period are never completely resolved. When they lose their centrality in a person's life however, and the person's current life structure has served its purpose, they then move on to the next stage of development. Thus, while she believes that the sequence of stages is invariant, she also believes that there are always loose ends that may continue to crop up.

With this background in mind, let us look at the stages Sheehy outlines.

PULLING UP ROOTS

After the age of eighteen Americans begin to pull up roots in earnest. In order to accomplish the tasks of locating themselves in a peer group, a sex role, an occupation, and a personal world view, they gather the energy to leave home physically. They also gain the identity to begin to accomplish the arduous and much more difficult task of leaving home emotionally.

Sheehy points out that even as people seek to become individuals, they desire the safety and comfort of being fused with another. Thus, many marry in an attempt to accomplish their developmental tasks through attaching to another. A typical pattern in our society has been for boys to seek and explore an individual life and for girls to attach themselves to husbands in order to accomplish the task of pulling up roots. In our society, husbands are typically two to seven years older than their wives. Thus, the boy has usually attained some success in breaking away while the girl often does not negotiate this passage by becoming an individual, but by merging her identity with a "stronger one." As a result, she often moves from the safety and comfort of her parents' protection to the safety and comfort of her husband's protection. Since it seems that it is necessary to have an identity crisis in order to achieve autonomous adulthood, girls more frequently have an identity crisis during a later transition when the dangers and penalties are greater.

THE TRYING TWENTIES

Sheehy tells us that the shift into this period is that from a focus on the person's own internal turmoils to a focus on the external factors that affect a person's life. Instead of focusing on who one is or what reality is like, the individual focuses on questions like "How do I put my aspirations into effect?", "What is the best way to start, where do I go?", "Who can help me?", and "How did you do it?" Sheehy agrees that Erikson's task of intimacy and Levinson's task of shaping a "Dream," preparing for a life work, and finding a mentor are central to this period. She points out however that the theme of this period is doing what we should. Family models, cultural instructions, or the prejudices of peers dictate and define a person's "shoulds." If the message Jeanne gets is that she should marry, she will. If Bruce is told that he should be doing his own thing, he is likely to avoid commitment with all the commitment to doing his own thing that he can muster.

Two contradictory forces of setting our future firmly in place and exploring/experimenting are at work during this period, and we tend to feel that the choices we make are irreversible. During this period we make choices that set in motion a Life Pattern that strongly influences the issues each of us deals with. Whatever the Life Pattern we choose, we tend to believe that we have found the right and true path. If we have married, we tend to believe that we are the one true couple and that we will grow together. In actuality, growing together equally is virtually impossible in a patriarchal society. Sheehy points out that "only

one half of the couple has the use of that remarkable support system known as a wife." Growth at this age is at a different tempo for husband and wife with the wife providing the maintenance necessary for the rapid growth of her husband. Wives tend to follow their husbands to new geographic locations and provide the home maintenance and emotional support that allows a man to concentrate on upward career growth to shape a "Dream," prepare for a lifework, and find a mentor.

Women are mastering the task of intimacy during this period, an issue which men leave unresolved and which tends to come "home to roost" in very painful ways at later periods in their development.

Men who marry during this period tend to marry for safety, to fill a vacancy in themselves, to get away from home to gain prestige, or to set up a practical manner of living. The "shoulds" for men during this period center on career and upward mobility.

During this period in which women are mastering the tasks of intimacy, their "shoulds" tend to center around home and family. Thus, the development of men and women during this period tends to be very different, and their growth is anything but parallel. Even though women's roles are changing, studies have demonstrated that women fear success because they may lose in love and popularity. In addition, many studies indicate that both younger and older men tell the life story of the first half of their lives in terms of their career line, while younger and older women tell their stories in terms of their attachments and detachments from parents, lovers, husbands, and children.

CATCH-30

The pervasive question of this period is "What do I want out of life now that I'm doing what I ought to do?" Thus, the catch at 30 is the requirement of a personal solution. No solution developed by another person will satisfy this need. Men and women both speak of feeling too narrow and restricted. The fit of the choices of the twenties feels different, and some new inner aspect that was left out of the Life Pattern begins to push for expression. Thus, one must make new choices and either alter or deepen commitments already made that already have been established.

A common response to the turmoil experienced during this period is to tear up the life we have so assuredly put together in the twenties. Everything feels in flux, and there is a striving to make major changes. This is a common period for divorce to occur, and if it doesn't, a serious review of the marriage and what each partner wants from life should take place. Often the woman may experience her first concern with career issues. At the same time, men often make demands on women to change and become more like them. Both the woman's inner urge and her husband's demands are coming at a time when women feel least able to accomplish anything outside the home. The

confidence the man has achieved through successfully accomplishing the life-work tasks of the twenties has been denied to the woman. At the same time, the man is usually on the move in his own career and doesn't have the time or the interest in helping his wife develop. In addition, he is often unwilling to give up the services of a wife while she takes some courses or tries her hand at a job. Often the first infidelities occur at this stage as the man seeks to find a stimulating companion he can enjoy at no cost to himself.

ROOTING AND EXTENDING

As people pass through the Catch-30 crisis, they tend to settle down in earnest. They buy houses, raise children, and become very serious about climbing the career ladder. This urge seems to be particularly strong in those who have torn up the life structure of their twenties. This is a period in which people experience a need for and a sense of stability. They tend, after surviving the Catch-30 crisis, to feel that there is plenty of time. It is not until they set off on the mid-life passage that they again begin to feel a sense of urgency.

This first half of life then can be seen to be composed of relatively stable periods interrupted by crisis points which end in a restructuring of the previous Life Pattern. The period of the twenties tends to be the longest and most stable of any of our developmental stages. It is in this period that we adopt the roles and thus form the Life Patterns that we will restructure or tear up throughout the rest of life.

Because of the importance the Life Patterns formed during the twenties have in shaping the issues that each of us must deal with in succeeding years, we need to look more closely at them in order to understand fully Sheehy's theory. The patterns will be described, and their influence on the events in the Catch-30 phase will be examined as well as their influence on the mid-life passage prior to discussion of those stages that comprise the mid-life patterns.

LIFE PATTERNS

Sheehy believes that the most one can do in describing women's life patterns is to report where various choices have led in the past. In her book she describes five patterns that are discernible among women. These are (beginning with the most traditional pattern and proceeding to the most experimental):

- **Caregiver** - defined as a woman who marries in her early twenties or before and who at that time has no desire to go beyond the domestic role.
- **Either-Or** - this pattern includes women who feel required in their twenties to choose between love and children or work and accomplishment. Sheehy reports two sub-types of this group:

1. **Nurturer Who Defers Achievement** - This woman postpones serious career efforts in order to marry and start a family. Unlike the caregiver, she intends to pursue career interests at a later date.

2. **Achiever Who Defers Nurturing** - This woman postpones motherhood, and often marriage in order to spend at least six or seven years completing her professional preparation. Her intent is to marry and have a family later.

- **Integrators** - These are women who try to combine it all in their twenties — marriage, career, and motherhood.

- **Never Married Women** - Included in this category are office wives, women who devote their lives to caring for public men and politicians often to the exclusion of any other deep personal tie. Also, in this category are women who Sheehy refers to as paranurturers — social workers, teaching nuns, custodians of the retarded who lend their creativity to caring for the children of the world. These are women who find someone to care for but choose to do so in roles other than familial.

- **Transients** - These women choose impermanence in their twenties and wander sexually, occupationally, and geographically.

CAREGIVERS

Sheehy tells us that of the life patterns described above and set in motion by the choices of the twenties, most women elect to be CAREGIVERS. There is a life of cherishing, succoring, listening to, and believing in other people. They are women who live for human relations and work out any personal ambitions through others. These women choose roles that are defined by their relationship to another (mother, wife, etc.). What a caregiver is seldom prepared for is a marker event or life accident that may bump her out into the world in a sink-or-swim way. Husbands after all do become prisoners of war, lose their jobs, take mistresses, have heart attacks, and leave their caregiving wives in midlife with dismal regularity. And children grow up. Most caregiving women outlive their husbands, and these eventualities seldom figure into the youthful illusions of the caregiver.

So just as the caregiver lives for her attachments, she is dependent upon her attachment's continuing need for her. Sheehy humorously reports that most of us have mothers who were caregivers, some who led full and satisfying lives, and then at age 50 "bopped on out to become hotshot real estate ladies." Some of them caught unprepared for the momentous changes wrought by the women's movement retreated to entrenched positions and made a virtue of defending non-equal rights for women. Most of them, of course, did neither — simply went on as before, cleaning up after the rest of us!

Sheehy feels that few caregivers stay within the pattern and still develop as individuals. Her hypothesis is that caregiving often trains a woman to remain a manipulative child. She feels that while this may work acceptably for the first half of life, play-acting a role doesn't help one to know the truth about themselves. Since people must be willing to know their own truth if they are to pass into midlife as adults, this role maintains women in a child-like position.

The majority of the caregivers in Sheehy's study found that even though their marriage may have been good, it wasn't enough, and nearly two thirds of them by the time of publication of her book had gone back to school or sought a job. The greatest fear that Sheehy found in the caregiver was the fear of "being dumped," and there was also the fear of "progressive vegetation." Frequently, the conflict between safety and autonomy does not come to a head until midlife. Then there is a difficult distinction for the woman to make. Has she jockeyed her partner into being a blockade to growth? Or is he truly an unsatisfactory partner? If that is the case, is a woman in her forties better off with an incompatible, insensitive, or philandering husband or on her own? At about age 30, most caregivers have an impulse to expand. Often if they do not, they end up being dumped and become bitter and disabled in seeking any function beyond the domestic one. Sheehy's advice is that at some point every caregiver must learn to care a little more for herself if she is to make her own life satisfactory.

EITHER-OR

When studies are conducted on women's early choice patterns, according to Sheehy about half of the respondents fall into the EITHER-OR category. Such women believe that they can implement only one aspect of their self-concept at a time. They believe that they must put off strenuous career efforts in order to marry and start a family (in exchange for dependable affection) or that they must tough out preparation for a career, postponing marriage and motherhood (often settling on scraps for affection). According to Sheehy, at some point most women feel required to choose either love and children or work and accomplishment. She wonders aloud whether if men were presented with such a choice if there would be any husbands.

Nurturer Who Defers Achievement

In Sheehy's work, women who solve the either-or dilemma by marrying and deferring achievement (the nurturer who defers) often finds it difficult to pick up later on. She feels that an unforgivable disservice is done to women who are promised pie in the sky later in exchange for being good little role fillers for 15 or 20 years. Most of the reports of these vague promises of later career fulfillment appear in housewives' magazines and are written by women who have not dropped out or deferred. Sheehy, commenting on the current status of the women's movement says, "It is not hard to imagine why some of the angriest

middle aged women around today were the intellectual girls of the 1940s." These are the women for whom the promises never materialized.

The central question for all nurturing women who postpone their own expansion becomes, "How does a woman find her own identity outside of marriage without jeopardizing it or her children?" Each passage raises the issue anew, and if it is not resolved and postponement continues, eventually, according to Sheehy, the pilot light goes out, and the woman feels defeated and generally unhappy.

Achiever Who Defers Nurturing

There are few models in the research and developmental studies of the adult years of the achieving woman who has deferred nurturing and then becomes a successful wife and mother. The only thorough examination was conducted by Margaret Henning (a Harvard University doctoral dissertation in 1970). She traced the lives of 25 women who held positions as presidents or vice presidents of large business or financial corporations. All saw their choices in their twenties as either-or and chose to defer nurturance in favor of achievement (to put aside their romantic yearnings). Henning found that in this group all subjects:

- were the first born child in their families.
- liked being girls and objected to persons who told them there were certain things girls didn't do.
- were encouraged by their fathers to resist constraints.
- resisted the oedipal loop at adolescence that normally sends girls back to identification with their mothers.
- went to college, preferring to be educated in a profession oriented environment and in the company of men (co-educational schools).
- excelled academically and more than half majored in economics or business.
- formed deep mentor-mentee attachments to their boss who took over where their fathers left off.
- remained dependent upon their mentors until reaching middle management and the water shed age of 35.

The biological boundary line of 35 became the motivator to examine the nurture problem, and the women in this study chose to handle their mid-life crisis in a remarkably consistent way. They continued to work but much less strenuously for a year or two; over half married, and though none had natural children, all those who married became stepmothers. Those who did not marry made other basic shifts of becoming more outgoing and responsive to people and often became mentors themselves. Two years or so after this, all 25 recommitted to a goal of working toward top management and happy ending!

Henning's control group of women who became frozen in middle management positions revealed markedly different parental situations and tended to deny their femininity. They did not achieve good mentor situations at work and most importantly never allowed themselves a crisis, not even in midlife. None married. They did not proceed to the top, and they arrived in their 50s lonely as women, second best as executives, feeling bitter and cheated as people.

INTEGRATORS

It was not until the 1960s that the INTEGRATORS in Sheehy's descriptions were considered anything but insurrectionary. Sheehy reports that it is rarely possible for a woman to integrate marriage, career, and motherhood in her 20s. It is quite possible to do so at 30 and decidedly possible at 35, but before then the personal integration necessary as a ballast for development simply hasn't had a chance to develop. Sheehy's discussions with Margaret Mead and Daniel Levinson, which she reports in her book, reveal that both of these investigators agree with her on this. If the integrator holds things together through her 20s, she finds in her 30s that she has become confident and practiced enough to dovetail all her competing priorities. Sheehy laments the fact that the resourceful solutions that often develop occur because of divorce or death before they may be implemented. The reader is referred to Sheehy's book, Chapter 16 on Women's Life Patterns for a more complete discussion of integrative life patterns in young women.

NEVER MARRIED

The NEVER-MARRIED woman constitutes about ten percent of the feminine population. Sheehy reports the research as suggesting the average single woman surpasses the average single man in education, occupation, and income. Further, as the single, never married woman ages, she brings stronger psychological reserves to bear in the challenges of her position than those demonstrated by bachelor men.

While Sheehy in her study devotes only a limited amount of discussion of the never married woman, she does suggest that today there are many strong models among unmarried women who are the cutting edge of new forms of living. Her comments on women who have found in other women exactly the companionship, encouragement, and understanding which they failed to find in men brings a fine dimension to the understanding of adult life. However these women often define their roles in ways that are similar to the caregiver role. Although, the choice of a professional caregiver role offers much more in the way of a total lifestyle than the role that is delimited only to family and often proves to be far more satisfactory throughout life.

TRANSIENTS

In discussing TRANSIENTS, young women who keep their options open during their 20s, Sheehy points out that the impermanence often becomes a pattern of prolonged wandering without commitments. Sheehy applauds refusal to trade self determination for the security of marriage and the freedom that it earns, and describes a variety of experiences obtained through this experimental life style. Since this is a relatively new phenomenon, however, not much is known about the satisfaction of a transient over the life span.

Some readers may feel disturbed by the descriptions included in Sheehy's volume of these newer counter culture life styles. Sheehy outlined the patterns discussed in this article with the famous American anthropologist, the late Margaret Mead. Dr. Mead (1972) projected that the only way we will make any headway toward integrated lives in the future is to forget role playing and give leeway to all kinds of patterns. She also observed:

"Some men are more interested in human relations than they are in public achievement. Some men would rather manage a house and children than go to the office everyday. There are some women who are just no good at all at houses and children. If we had a notion of every possible combination — man older, woman older, man goes out to work, woman goes out to work, both of them go out to work half-time, one of them works one year and the other works the next year — then no one pattern would be regarded as peculiar. We would remark in them in the way we say 'These people go to Europe every year,' and 'Those people never go to the country in the summer,' they would just be interesting differences."

In summary, women may adopt a variety of life patterns in the 20's. These patterns tend to form a cohesive thread throughout their lives, shaping the decisions that are made at each crisis point.

Men, too, develop life patterns that form a cohesive thread in their lives, some of them similar to those of women, others very dissimilar. The patterns in men's lives also shape the decisions made at later points in their lives. Since we have examined the lives of men so closely in Chapter II, the descriptions of men's patterns will be brief. These primary patterns are:

1. Transients - Those men who are either unwilling or unable to make firm commitments. Their lives prolong the experiments of youth and any commitments they make are provisional.
2. Locked In - These men make solid career and family commitments in their twenties and are the most familiar pattern. However, there is little self examination, and their "neat" life may crumble under crisis.

3. **Wunderkind** - These men create risk and play hard at winning in their careers. They believe that once they reach the top of the career ladder, their personal fears and insecurities will vanish. They give little time or attention to a personal life.

The above three patterns are the most common among American men. There are four more patterns however:

1. **Never Married Men** - We know little about the details of this pattern since only 5 percent of American men never marry.
2. **Paranurturers** - These men choose an occupation that enables them to be caregivers (clergymen, medical missionaries), or they nurture wives in a kind of role reversal.
3. **Latency Boys** - These men remain bound to their mothers and never accomplish the task of autonomy. Even though they may marry, little individuation takes place.
4. **Integrators** - Similar to women integrators, these men try to balance their ambitions with their family life. They share child care and have a conscious need to contribute to society.

The various life patterns of the people in Sheehy's study and how these patterns, while diverse, tend to form a cohesive thread throughout their lives, shape the decisions that are made at each crisis point.

Sheehy points out that the most typical patterns affect both the choices that the individual makes at crisis points after the twenties and the problems that these patterns pose in the lives of couples. In order to accomplish this task, we will look at the patterns within the framework of each stage. In this way, we will be able to tie together the life patterns, the developmental life of couples, and also discuss the second half of life.

THE CATCH 30 CRISIS

The caregiver typically experiences the urge to retreat to the security of an earlier stage during this period and to reel her husband in with her. The caregiver is essentially afraid of the inner impetus to broaden. In addition, this is the stage during which men often expect their wives to assume a new and productive role. However, they don't really want to deal with the issues their wives are experiencing because to do so distracts them from their own age 30 dilemmas. If the man has adopted the Wunderkind pattern, he is likely to really be bearing down on his own career concerns. Even the man who has adopted the locked-in pattern is primarily concerned with issues separate from his spouse. The essential shift at this age is an absolute requirement to become more self concerned. Thus, the Catch 30 crisis for couples is often loudly heard in the shattering of marriages. Sheehy points out that the most common age for divorce in the last fifty years has been 28 for the woman and 30 for the man.

THE DEADLINE DECADE CRISIS 35-45

The Deadline Decade begins the second half of life. We become only too aware that we have reached the second half of life, and we begin to feel the squeeze of time. Sheehy says that this is the period in which we experience an authenticity crisis. Each of us must ask ourselves what we really believe in and why we are doing whatever it is that we are doing with our lives. No matter how we have led our lives up to this point, those parts of ourselves that have been suppressed must now find expression. We are at an inner crossroad that demands our taking in of all our suppressed and unwanted parts as well as our overt and satisfactory selves in order to achieve full integration.

The sudden change we experience at this point is usually unexpected and so often the beginning of this passage is marked by depression. There are several experiences that seem to be relatively universal:

Change in Time Sense - Everyone feels the distortion of time that occurs as a result of reaching the end of growing up and the beginning of growing old. For those men and women whose life patterns have been focused on career, the sense of time is that it is running out. There is a fear that it may be too late to accomplish everything that was hoped for. Caregivers have an opposite distortion. They tend to suddenly see time as stretching endlessly in front of them. "Now that all the children are gone, what will I do with it."

Change in Sense of Aliveness Versus Stagnation - The time distortion often causes career men and women to feel stalled. It often seems too late to start something new. These people feel bored and stagnant. Women who have stayed home more often will come to see a realm of unimagined opportunities opening up in the middle years. There is often exhilaration, and assertiveness begins to rise. Now that the children will be gone, there are so many firsts ahead and plenty of time to do them in.

Change in Sense of Self and Others - This is the age in which our roles in relationship to others begins to change. Our teenage children see us differently, and we feel their change in perspective as they begin their disengagement process. Our parents are beginning to age and weaken, and we begin to feel the impending role change of assuming increasingly more responsibility for them.

De-Illusioning the Dream - Whatever it is that we are doing, we have to face up to the gap between the vision we had of ourself in the twenties and the actuality of our arrival at 40. No matter what our position in life is, we begin to wonder if this is all there is.

Within the universal framework men and women have very different experiences during the Deadline Decade. The key age for women tends to be 35. There are several facts of female life that force the sense of urgency at this particular age:

- Thirty-five is when the average mother sends her last child off to school.
- Thirty-five is the most common age at which women become unfaithful — many women are looking for a diversion now that their lives lack direction.
- The average married American woman enters or re-enters the working world at thirty-five, and few women are prepared for the discovery that raising a family is only half a life's work. For the deferred achiever, this is often an exhilarating experience. For the traditional caregiver, re-entry into the labor market often means being bumped out of their homes by necessity.
- Thirty-four is the average age at which the divorced woman remarries. The need to again try to build a partnership to fill intimacy needs often becomes paramount.
- Thirty-five is the most common age of the run-away wife. These are the women who are leaving husbands before they are deserted and who feel that running away is their last chance.
- Thirty-five marks the time when a woman realizes that she will no longer be a childbearer. There is a sense of a closing off of a very important part of one's self.

Men tend to feel the greatest press of the Deadline Decade when they reach 40. The corporate Wunderkind must often face up to the fact that he is never going to become president of the company. He must face the fact that his dream is impossible and come to terms with the realities of his personal life. Sheehy reminds us that Erikson says that the way out of the crisis for men is through generativity. Men turn their efforts to training the younger generation — if they feel they have something to offer. Often a man, especially one who has followed the locked-in pattern, may feel unappreciated and utterly valueless and thus find himself unable to be generative. At this time the answer may be a second career. However, this option requires great courage and a difficult reassessment and redirection of energy and skills.

As are all crisis points, this too is a trying time for couples. If a couple is to find fulfillment in midlife, the earlier roles of breadwinner husband and caregiver wife must be renegotiated. The roles, the rules, the dreams, and the ideals that served well in the first half of life are not those which successfully fit the second. If such a renegotiation does not take place, the couple will either collapse, collide often and painfully with each other, or fall into the "twenty-year marriage slump."

THE RESIGNATION OR RENEWAL CRISIS (50+)

This period called middle age is a period when both men and women can tap into new veins of energy. Secondary interests are often transformed into meaningful life tasks that enable an individual to find fulfillment throughout old age. This is the period when one must come to grips with the issues of their own physical aging, aging parents, and redefine their attitudes toward money, religion, and death. Roles again shift as we retire, become parent to our aging parents, and seek new ways in which to find fulfillment.

Studies report that this is the period in which there is a dramatic climb in the satisfaction with marriage for those couples that either survive or remarry at this time.

Finally, the task that must be accomplished is self approval. One of the greatest rewards of reaching this point in life comes when one finally approves of oneself ethically and morally and independent of the standards of others. This is what Erikson refers to as integrity.

The second half of life, like the first half for Sheehy, can be seen to be a series of stable periods punctuated by crisis. Each crisis calls on the individual to change and grow — to develop. The life patterns that are formed during the twenties influence and shape the directions and the nature of the crisis that we must resolve. In addition, these patterns influence couple interactions in such a way as to further shape the cause of individual lives.

Sheehy's theory, as can be seen, draws considerably on the work of Erikson and Levinson. However, her concept of life patterns and resultant couple interactions adds dimensions to theorizing about adult development that enriches the total picture of adult life.

Adult Roles and Their Relationship to Stages of Adult Development

In discussions of adult development, the primary focus tends to be on the stages of development and the characteristics of each stage rather than on our individual experiences of development. Thus, one learns about each stage, the age at which it occurs, and what issues and tasks characterize that stage. The focus is external to the individual, on those things that will happen to the individual, on those issues the individual will have to resolve, on those tasks the individual will have to accomplish, and on those transitions the individual must negotiate. As a result, there is often little attention directed toward the manner in which an individual experiences the stages of development. Our human experiencing of these stages seems to be tied only to the stages themselves and the myriad of characteristics of each stage. There is a lack of a sense of any order to the experiences one can expect to encounter as we move through each stage. We do not experience our lives as lacking order however, nor do our experiences feel chaotic. Life seems, for most of us, to have a continuity and rhythm — our existence feels relatively ordered.

The mechanisms which serve to put order into our lives and give us this sense of continuity are the social roles that we fill. The concept of social role, as sociologists use the term, refers to situations in which a specific pattern of behavior is expected of an individual. These patterns of behavior create interactions between individuals that repeat themselves in a regular way over a period of time. The roles that we fill, such as father, mother, wife, husband, employer, or employee specify the part individuals are to play in their group or community. For example, as parents we are expected to behave in specific ways toward our children and not in other ways. We are to teach them how to tie their shoes, behave appropriately, and value education. We are not expected to teach them how to play hockey, use swear words or smoke. The latter "teachings" are to come from those other children who fill the role of peers. In addition, we do not behave toward other children as we do toward our own. It is not our "role" to assume the primary responsibility for the nurturance and values education of other people's children.

The social rules that we assume throughout life (and there is no point in life in which we do not assume some roles) usually last for a fairly extended period of time. The time that we assume a new role is generally age related. For some social roles, the period of time that we fill a role may correlate with a specific stage of development. More often, however, the roles that we fill continue through several stages. Typically, roles are cumulative

over the life span, gradually dropping out after a relatively long period of time. At any given point in time, we may be assuming a new role, dropping an old role, and/or maintaining several other roles previously assumed. Consider the following case.

Mary is 18. She is completing her last year of high school. The day after she graduates, she and Howard plan to marry. Her parents are concerned that Mary is not prepared for marriage and have refused to pay for the wedding. Since Mary would like a wedding that her school friends can attend, she plans to continue her job as a clerk in a department store for at least six months after the wedding. If she does this, she and Howard can pay back the money they plan to borrow for the wedding.

As can be seen, Mary's life can be conceptualized according to the roles that she fills. There are new roles that she will assume (wife and debtor) which will change her life considerably. There is a role that she is leaving (student) that will also change her life considerably. However, there are new roles that she will continue to fill that will give her life a sense of continuity (employee, daughter, peer). Mary is in a period of transition — she is leaving an old role and acquiring new roles.

While we are always engaged in roles, we are not always in a period of transition. Let us look further at Mary's life:

Mary is now 24. She has two children, a daughter, three years old and a son, one year old. She and Howard have bought a small house. She quit her job as planned after six months and has devoted her time to community activities with her friends and is treasurer of a women's club. She is an excellent homemaker, and she and Howard entertain often. Her parents have accepted her marriage, and the two families visit back and forth often. Mary and her mother are very close and speak on the phone several times a week.

Mary has entered a very stable period in her life. Since we last looked at her life, she has acquired and comfortably fills the roles of parent, community worker, club treasurer, homemaker, and hostess. She is maintaining the roles of mother, wife, daughter, and peer. However, she is not in the process of leaving any roles or of acquiring new roles. She senses her life as stable and continuous.

SOCIAL ROLES AND ADULT DEVELOPMENT

From the above sketches of Mary's life, it can be seen that those stages of the life span which are experienced as stable in an outline of development such as Levinson's, are those periods in which there are few if any role shifts. Similarly, when we are confronting many role shifts, (both the loss of old roles and the acquisition of new ones) we are in periods of transition. As we have learned from Levinson, transitional periods are often full of turmoil and even crisis. When adult development is examined in terms of roles in this manner, it seems that when role shifts are minimal, our personal experience is one of security and stability. Our lives feel relatively tranquil. It is when role shifts are imminent (we face the loss of old roles or move toward acquiring new ones) that we experience disruption in our lives, and the tranquil ebb and flow of our personal oceans disappears under the storm winds of change. From the above discussion, we can understand how the roles that we keep over long periods of time help maintain our sense of continuity and order. It is also important to understand how the loss of roles and the acquisition of new ones can lead to our feelings of crisis during transitional periods. Usually it is not the actual role shifts that precipitate the feelings of disruption and turmoil. It is the anticipation of change or the realization that expected role shifts will not occur in our life that brings about the transition. Any transition will not be resolved until one has let go of the old roles that are no longer appropriate and settled successfully into the new upcoming roles.

These transitional periods that begin with anticipation and end with our settling into a new life structure are composed of a new alignment of roles. They are frequently periods of time in which we experience separation anxiety, depression, and fear of failure.

ROLE LOSS

As we become aware that we must relinquish a role, we begin to experience anxiety over separating from a piece of our life. This piece of life has become familiar to us and represents a significant aspect of our self-structure. To lose a role means that we must lose a part of ourselves. After all, it is through our roles that we find meaning in life. (This is not to say that the roles themselves give us meaning but that it is the way that we personally live out our roles that we find meaning.) When we finally leave a role, we often experience a wrenching sense of loss, and we then suffer depression and anger. This is often the case if we do not acquire roles that we expected to fill. The failure of the expectations that a role will materialize creates a feeling of loss. If we do not acquire new roles to fill the time that will be vacated by the loss of the role that is no longer appropriate, we experience a sense of emptiness.

ROLE ACQUISITION

The acquisition of new roles however, is a mixed blessing. While it is new role shifts that keep our lives from being left empty as a result of lost roles, and it is new

roles that give us new excitement and help us find new meanings in life, it is also anticipated new role shifts that fill us with fears of failure. While we may look forward to the new roles that we will fill, we are often aware at some level that we don't really know if we can be successful in the new role. Nor do we know if we will really like being a spouse, a parent, or an employee. Filling a new role may turn out to be an extremely unpleasant experience. In order to fill a new role, we must:

- Try it on for size
- Master the skills necessary to the role
- Invest the role with our own unique personal style

Not until we have done this can the role add new meaning to our life and become a successful aspect of our life structure. To illustrate this, let us look at Mary's life one more time.

Mary is now 37. Both her children are in school, and she is feeling restless. Her community activities are insufficient to fill her days. Howard has moved up in his company and is away much of the time on business. They seem to have grown very far apart, and Mary has a nagging fear that there is no longer room for her in Howard's life. What little time they have together is filled with arguments. Still, she rationalizes that her marriage is better than being alone. In her community activities, she has helped tutor children at the elementary school her children attended. The teachers and principal have commented that she is a natural teacher. She likes the idea of teaching, but that would mean going to college, and her grades were never good in high school.

Mary is not yet losing or acquiring roles. She is beginning to anticipate both losses and an acquisition however. She is sensing the possible loss of her role as wife; her old parenting role has shifted to a new one giving her a notion of how empty her life might be when the children grow up and leave. At the same time, she is experiencing a faint idea about a possible new role (teacher). She has not yet conquered either her separation anxiety or her fear of failure sufficiently however, to go on to the next stage of development. Mary is beginning a transition period.

From this discussion, the function of social roles in adult development could be viewed as a trigger to adult development. While social roles are not the cause of adult development, each stage is accompanied by social roles that are continued from a prior stage, and new roles that must be acquired. Often a new stage of development is achieved after a role has been relinquished. It is the roles that we maintain over several stages that give our lives a sense of continuity, stability, and order. However, the anticipation of changing roles often trigger transitional periods that are not completed until a new alignment of roles is in place. Thus, the social roles people fill in their lifetime are significant vehicles for a person to attain satisfaction and meaning in life.

The Mid-Life Crisis

Because of the tumultuous changes in this developmental crisis, the mid-life transition is referred to also as the mid-life crisis, and it is characterized by many role changes which result in experiences that most of us describe as negative.

Consider the following examples:

- Les and Karen, a couple in their mid 40's, married for 23 years, parents of three teenage children, file for divorce!
- Vic, an excellent teacher, becomes noticeable by the amount of time he spends at home with trivial physical ailments.
- Howard, a department head, is observed outside of work in the company of his secretary often enough to raise comment.
- Mike, an executive whose career can only be described as successful, walks into the personnel office and resigns. He is a man who has risen through the ranks, in stiff competition, and is regarded as a "comer" for the future. He says he feels limited in the company and wants out!
- Milt, one of the best supervisors in the firm, who for years always arrived early and stayed late, gradually begins working from 9 to 5, develops a negative attitude, complains about everything and everybody, and earns the reputation of being cranky all the time.
- Steve, the lead researcher on a team of five, has several drinks for lunch everyday, rarely eats the food he orders, is seen going into a bar at coffee-break time.
- At the school social gatherings, a few people who know them well notice that one of the directors, Tom, and his wife, Pauline, spend no time together and rarely even speak to each other.
- Another director, Dave, becomes excessively demanding of his young executives and begins driving himself just as hard.
- A very successful manager, Peter, whom everyone believes to have a sound family life, begins "making a play" for every young girl in the company.

The people in the above examples have one thing in common. Something has changed in their outlook on life, and that change has had a substantial and significant impact on their behavior. Often the end result of these types

of changes is disaster or near disaster. These types of changes and their disruptive effects often characterize the mid-life transition period.

It can also be seen from the examples above that the symptoms of mid-life crisis are many and varied. Much of the research indicates that under-girding the symptoms is either an active feeling of unhappiness and dissatisfaction or at the least a lack of happiness often expressed as a feeling of dullness or lifelessness.

The causes of the mid-life crisis are rooted in the interaction of normal human events and the society in which we live, and the symptoms and causes of the mid-life crisis can be categorized in the following ways:

Symptoms	Causes
I. Personality Oriented	I. Physical
A. Unhappiness	
B. Insecurity	II. Environmental
C. Depression	A. Job Pressure
D. Indecision	B. Societal Change
E. Fear and Anxiety	C. Expectations of Others
F. Conflict	
G. Restlessness	III. Emotional
H. Trappedness	A. Redundancy
II. Behavioral Oriented	B. Lack of a Meaningful Personal Philosophy
A. Irrational Job Changes	C. Options
B. Reduction in Productivity	D. Frustrations
C. Resentment	E. Grouping
D. Retreat from Responsibility	F. Depth of Personal Relationships
E. Alcoholism	G. Fears
F. Infidelity	
G. Inconsistency	

Our discussion of the overlapping symptoms and causes of the mid-life crisis as shown in the chart will be more meaningful if viewed in the context of life's predictable events and the roles that we fill. We have an infinite ability to grow, develop, and to discover. We also have an incalculable capacity to create problems for ourselves. A delusion that gets us into constant trouble is the fantasy that we will continue on into the future exactly as we are

today. There are, however, really only three things in life that can be predicted with accuracy.

1. We change continuously from birth onward. The basic attributes, talents, abilities, and characteristics that we are born with are developed and modified as we grow. As we grow we are ever required to acquire new roles and to relinquish old ones. What we are **today** is the end result of the interaction of what we start with and what happens to us. This interaction will continue throughout life.
2. Our world will change continuously. The world in which we live influences every aspect of our life. It can be a warm friendly place, or it can be threatening and grim. It can be anxiety producing or psychologically harmful. It can be physically harmful. Whatever it is, it will **change**, and we will be affected by that change. What we are at any given point in time is the product of the interaction of a changing world with a changing self.
3. At the end of each individual's life is death. Somewhere in the middle years, death becomes a reality that many persons wish to reject. In a society which generates youth, physical strength, and sexual virility, people react negatively when threatened with the loss of these things.

The chart presented earlier in this chapter provides us with classification schemes to permit description of the individual elements. The reader should recognize that there is considerable overlap of the factors; in fact at one time a symptom may become a cause in the cyclical development of a problem like the mid-life crisis and that the definitions are rather arbitrary. The human organism is much too complex to be confined by such simple mechanisms.

Of all the personality oriented symptoms listed, a state of general unhappiness and dissatisfaction is the most common of all symptoms. While not as dramatic as symptoms such as divorce, infidelity, performance ineffectiveness, or alcoholism, there is a far greater incidence of general unhappiness that does not culminate in disastrous or climactic events. These are the individuals who do not resolve the tasks of the life stages but rather continue to grind through life finding enjoyment in little if anything and generally feeling miserable. Most characteristically, people with this problem live on hopelessly and look forward to little more than additional years of the same thing.

Another very major symptom of the mid-life crisis is insecurity. During the mid-life period, there are three aspects of security (or lack of it) that are symptomatic of a crisis.

1. **Financial Security** - While very few people are completely free of material insecurity, during the mid-life crisis we often see the symptom of abnormal fear of loss of job. This causes some men to work

harder than they need to, worry excessively, and accept indignities that debase their self-image and yet are considered necessary to job retention. Often, women responding to the changes in their husbands recognize that they may not always have their financial security provided by a husband. If they have no preparation to enter the working world, they often become excessively concerned about their security. Frequently, faced with their own inability to care for themselves, they experience a drastic shock to their self-esteem.

2. **Security of Belonging** - Humans are gregarious by nature, and people find fulfillment in the company of their companions and strength in the security of those relationships. At mid life, problems frequently lead to alienation and isolation. The middle agers find themselves in conflict even with their closest friends as with age they become more sensitive to criticism, stronger in the depth of their own feelings, and less flexible in dealing with change. This often extends to the family. The situation becomes one in which the father/husband who has spent the bulk of his time in the business world where standards are harsh and unforgiving believes that he must prepare his children for a world in which they must fill roles which will have the same demands as the one in which he has experienced. He comes in conflict with the mother/wife who often feels that she must defend the children because of her intimate knowledge of their intentions as well as their behavior. Often the wife/mother will align herself with the children and against her husband with the result being alienation and conflict. Sometimes the father is even driven or flees from the family circle with all of the consequences of that flight. The real problem, of course, is that both people are unable to cope with the situation because of lack of flexibility. The man is unable to reconcile the realities of his world with the real persons that his children are becoming. He is unable to recognize that his children live in a different world and that they must prepare for the changed world in which they will have to live. This lack of ability to be flexible and to redefine his role increases his feelings of alienation and his children's feelings of alienation from him. The woman is unable to understand the feelings that propel her husband and generally is unable to act as a genuine mediator. She feels that she must take sides and is torn by the conflict between alienating herself from her husband or from her children. Frequently as she vacillates between the two forces, she begins to feel estranged from everyone.

3. **Personal-Emotional Security** - A characteristic of individuals at mid-life is that they develop feelings of self-doubt in many areas. One consequence of self-doubt is that many mid-lifers develop a strong fantasy life and even identify with younger men and women who appear to "have it all together." The mid-lifers who try to emulate the behavior of the

younger ideal whom they identify with, often will suffer the ridicule of those whose attitudes can and do affect their lives.

Often, because of his ego, the male middle ager cannot ask for what he needs to help him cope with his fears of inadequacy and drifts apart from those people who care about him and help him the most. This results in even a greater negative impact on his self confidence which then expands and extends into other areas. Often this self destructive cycle results in cynicism and/or behavior that will destroy his family.

Depression is a societal problem that today has reached almost epidemic proportions. As people enter their 40s, they often experience conflict between what they **have** to do on their jobs and in their home life and what they would like to do. When the size of the gap becomes apparent and it appears that the gulf can never be bridged, depression follows, along with the other self-destructive behaviors.

Some men wake up one day to the realization that the price paid for achieving success has been to grow apart from their families and friends and conclude (rightly or wrongly) that nothing can be done. Women wake up to discover that they have spent their entire life nurturing others and have never achieved an identity of their own or a life/work that can give them a satisfying sense of achievement and self worth.

Many people in the mid-life period have achieved their initial career goals, have recognized that setting higher goals may not be realistic, and feel trapped by their responsibilities with no open avenue to pursue. Depression

follows, as they face the belief that life has become a treadmill.

The most prominent behavioral symptoms are irrational job change, reduction in productivity, retreat from responsibility, and divorce — for many people depressing and negative in their connotation. A review of the chart provides us with a list of emotional causes of mid-life crisis that are staggering and frightening to contemplate for even those who are not experiencing the phenomenon. Therefore it is important to point out that — in contrast to all that has been written about the mid-life crisis, here are people who find opportunity as well as danger in the mid-life period. These are the people who resolve the life task who become generative, who are able at this stage of life to see the mid-life period as a time for constructive re-appraisal, rededication, and renewed enthusiasm with resulting increased productivity, improved job satisfaction, personal growth via change, and real achievement. They relinquish roles which they have outgrown and search eagerly for new roles to help them expand their sense of self-worth. These changes, however, are also often very dramatic. A divorce or job upheaval can be a productive growth producing change as well as a negative product of crisis. There are no events which can be judged by an outsider by the nature of the event alone. Les and Karen's divorce may be either a negative or a positive event in their lives. It is not the event that is significant, but the meaning that it holds for the individuals. It is the lonely struggle of each mid-lifer to resolve the crisis and decide either to retreat into a dead end and lifeless existence or to make whatever changes are necessary (regardless of societal opinion) in order to continue to grow and develop constructively.

Summary

Adult development theorists believe that the changes that occur during the adult years are predictable and age linked. They discuss how change is resolved by the majority of the adult population.

While there is a considerable body of research on adult development that has been completed during the decade of the 70s, this Monograph dealt primarily with the formulations of three individuals. The first is Erik Erikson of Harvard University whose early work in the field of child development was monumental and preceded his recent and current interest in adult development. The second is Daniel Levinson of Yale University who studied a group of males in four occupational groups over a period of several years. He built carefully on the work of Erikson, and it is interesting to note that Levinson's recent interests and those of his students in psychology at Yale have centered about the life stages of adult females. There are as yet unpublished findings confirming the notion that women go through the same periods in their early adult development as do men but with important differences in the way in which they traverse the stages. The third is Gail Sheehy an investigative reporter who conducted her investigations as a result of interest in the phenomenon generated as a result of the passage through a life crisis of her own.

Erikson's work is the landmark upon which the later research has been built. He conceptualized development throughout the life span by describing eight stages through which humans must pass. He pointed out that each stage began with a crisis that if successfully resolved, enabled the individual to become more vital and activated in a new way. He also indicated that failure to negotiate the major task off a given life stage resulted in personality qualities that make it difficult to accomplish the tasks of the subsequent stages.

Of the eight life stages that Erikson identified, the latter three occur in the adult years and comprise the adult stages of the life cycle. The task of intimacy with self, inner life, and with others is the major job of young adulthood. Erikson pointed out that the task of intimacy includes more than a love-based mutually satisfying sexual relationship and involves learning to share financial goals, ideas, friends, and emotions. It is the establishment of this sharing that enables a person to achieve intimacy. When a person cannot enter wholly into an intimate relationship because of fear of losing their identity, they often develop a sense of isolation.

It is out of the intimacies of young adulthood that generativity becomes the task of middle age. Erikson defined generativity as the mature person's interest in establishing, caring for, and guiding the next generation. Involved

is establishing a family, and creating a life's work or career into one that will mentor the next generation. It is unfortunate when the task is not negotiated well since the result of this failure is often self absorption and often a pervading sense of stagnation and interpersonal impoverishment.

In maturity (Erikson's euphemistic term for old age), the developmental task is one of achieving integrity. It is the final life stage, and it is posited that people who have been able to adapt well to the disappointments as well as the triumphs of their generative activities as parents or as co-workers reach maturity and approach the end of life with integrity, i.e., an acceptance of their own responsibility for what their life is and was. Erikson claimed that this involved the development of a sense of ideological commitment and a sense of life as being worthwhile. This is the time of life when we can achieve a sense of satisfaction with the way we have lived and with our own unique achievements. And finally, the accomplishment of integrity leads one to pass on hope to a future generation. The task is not negotiated by all — witness the despair and depression that pervades the lives of many old persons.

Like Erikson, Daniel Levinson reports on something we call adult development. He tells us that there is a psycho-social evolution in adulthood, just as in childhood and adolescence and that we cannot understand adults and the changes they go through in their lives unless we have a concept of what is intensive to adulthood.

Levinson conceptualizes the periods of adult development as more than a function of adult socializing systems, although he feels that these systems play an important part in defining timetables and in shaping one's course through them. There are it seems a wide variety of biological, psycho-dynamic, cultural, social-structural, and other timetables which characterize adult development periods and which operate in a system of partial synchronization.

The early adult era according to Levinson centers on leaving the family, getting into the adult world, and leads to a period of "settling down." Just prior to the "settling down" period, there is a predictable transition period which occurs at about age 30 to 32 when most of the men in Levinson's study worked on questions dealing with deeper commitment to occupation and a stable life structure versus changing occupations and life styles.

A concept of great value to understanding adult development in this stage is the "dream." Many men enter adulthood with a dream or vision of their own future. The

"dream" is usually articulated within a career context. When there was a "dream," Levinson explored its nature and vicissitudes over the life course. Major shifts in life's direction at subsequent ages are often occasioned by a reactivation of the sense of betrayal or compromise of the dream. That is to say, very often in the crises that occur at age 30, 40, or even later, a major issue is reactivation of a guiding dream frequently one that goes back to the early 20s and the concern with its failure.

A second crucial concept is that of the transition — the link between periods early adulthood — midlife — later adulthood. Levinson is very specific about age linkages in order to counteract the strong tendency to assume that in adulthood very little is age-linked because development isn't occurring. He is tenacious in pursuing his belief that age linkages are stronger than have been recognized.

After a period of "settling down," the structure changes again. Levinson pointed out that the reason why the "settling down" structure must change is that it is based upon illusions.

- Illusions about the importance and meaning of achieving one's occupational goals,
- Illusions about one's relationship with significant other human beings.
- Illusions about what it is one truly wants in life.

The new structure, called BOOM, (Becoming One's Own Man) is a connecting link to the mid-life transition. The BOOM time tends to occur in the late 30s. A key element is the man's feeling that no matter what he has accomplished to date, he is not sufficiently his own man. A sense of constraint or oppression often occurs in the arenas of work, marriage, and other relationships.

At about age 40 to 42, the mid-life transition gets underway. It lasts about five years for most men and serves as a bridge to middle adulthood. As in all transitions, a man must at this time come to terms with the past and prepare for the future.

The major tasks of the male mid-life transition are:

- The task of terminating the era of early adulthood (review and reappraisal of life to this point).
- The task of taking the first steps toward the initiation of middle adulthood. (Not yet ready to start building a new life structure, he begins to modify the negative elements of the present structure and to test new choices).
- The task of dealing with the polarities that are sources of deep division in his life.

Most of the researchers and investigators emphasize a single facet in the change process to be made in mid-life individuation. Erikson gives primary emphasis to gen-

erativity as a stage of ego development in the middle years. Elliott Jacques (1970) reports that the central issue at mid-life is coming to terms with one's own morality: a man must learn how, more deeply than was possible before that his own death is inevitable and that he and others are capable of great destructiveness. Bernice Neugarten (1976) identifies the basic mid-life change as growing "interiority", turning inward to the self, decreasing the emphasis on assertiveness and mastery of the environment, enjoying the process of living more than the attainment of specific goals.

In any event over 80 percent of the males in Levinson's sample experienced some upheaval during the mid-life period with the most prominent behavior symptom being a reduction in productivity, irrational job change, retreat from responsibility, and divorce — for many people depressing and negative in their connotation. It is important to point out, however, that there are many persons who find opportunity as well as danger in the mid-life period. These are the people who resolve the life task, who become generative, who are able at this stage of life to see the mid-life period as a time for constructive reappraisal, rededication, and renewed enthusiasm with resulting increased productivity, improved job satisfaction, personal growth via change and real achievement.

The upheavals of the mid-life period are events that should not be judged by an outsider by the nature of the event alone for it is not the event that is significant but the meaning that it holds for individuals. It is the lonely struggle of each person at midlife to resolve the crisis and decide either to retreat into a lifeless existence or to make whatever changes are necessary so that they may continue to grow and develop constructively.

Like Erikson and Levinson, Sheehy believes that we move through a series of life stages of development that are marked by predictable crises. She refers to these transitions as passages. A major contribution which Sheehy makes to our understanding of adult development is her concept of four areas of perception which are changed during each of the predictable passages. The four changed perceptions are:

- Our interior sense of self
- The proportion of safeness to danger
- Time
- Shift in sense of aliveness

Sheehy reports that our interior sense of self is relationship to others changes, and we see ourselves in relationship to others in a new way. The change in the proportion of danger to safeness is that we feel far more danger in our life than safety during a passage. Time changes too. While on a developmental plateau, we feel as if we have plenty of time, while during a passage, we feel as though time is running out on us, and finally, in a passage there is a shift in our sense of aliveness or stag-

nation. It is these background sensations that tend to act as a complex interrelated set of motivators in shaping the decisions to change our lives.

It is an interesting commentary on our culture that we find ourselves asking "What does adulthood mean?" And as with so many human affairs, the meaning lies in the question. What is arresting is that we should be asking a question that would have made so little sense to our fore-

bears. In the more static world of our ancestors, it would scarcely have been possible to conceive of time in the way which permitted Henri Bergson (In Erikson, 1978) to write, at about the turn of the twentieth century, "to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to create oneself endlessly." We have moved over the years from condition to process. In our culture, adulthood as a condition used to be simply assumed, as a process, it now seems to demand explanation.

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